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CPYRGHT

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IN SECURITY LEAKS

CPYRGHT Plug Up The Source

ARMCHAIR strategists, who complain that too much of our technical defense and military planning data are printed in scientific magazines and newspapers, get vigorous backing from Allen Dulles, director of the U. S. Central Intelligence Agency.

Those who erroneously conclude, however, that "something ought to be done to control the press" will find that Mr. Dulles disagrees with them completely. The head of America's intelligence setup stands "100 per cent for a free press and all that freedom of man and his institutions mean to Americans."

The real solution to our government's carelessness about security information is not to replace it with the rottenness of a government-controlled press such as is found in totalitarian regimes. Even if printing were abolished, Russia still would get information as long as government sources themselves tell it to persons who like to gossip.

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THE SOLUTION is a conscientious classification of security data. A primary root of the whole vexatious security problem is inter-service jealousy, under which one military arm seeks to outdo the rest, not only in size and power, but also in credit for new facilities and procedures.

As long as the services practice such publicity-seeking on the wrong kind of things, and fail to stop loose talk in general, so long will the press carry news on such matters. It is not only that once told, the information is in the public domain. It is not only that news is a highly competitive field, so that the press in general cannot ignore matter made public by one magazine or one radio network. Even more important is the fact that when information leaks out of the defense setup, and is available for the rumor circuit with all the distortions that are bound to result, the press is the only *thorough* means of seeing that the public gets facts instead of wild surmises.

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THE AMERICAN public has been given a shoddy deal by politicians who talk about things the Russians want to know, but who cover up their own blunders with the plea that a discussion of such matters is "not in the public interest."

If administrative officials would plug the leaks, official and unofficial, they would find the press publishing nothing that was clearly security information. The press is 100 per cent cooperative on matters which the military can demonstrate are of value to the enemy, and on which the military prevents leaks through non-press channels.

That cooperation would be clearly evident to the public if it knew one per cent of what editors knew during World War II but voluntarily did not publish. It would be evident if the public knew how much information is now in the hands of Washington correspondents from off-the-record sources, but on which the newsmen maintain a strict silence.

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MOST of the "why don't you censor?" questions come from persons who have a commendable concern for their country, but who have no knowledge of the above basic facts about security and news. Some persons know, but are merely thoughtless about the consequences to themselves of government control. A few know, but are sincere in their desire for a controlled press.

This last group is the little segment of people who live in a democracy, give lip service to democracy and maybe even *think* they believe in it—but who basically do not trust the ability of the public to make its own decisions on the basic facts. They are the little core of totalitarians found in all countries which promotes dictatorships, or promote the bureaucracy and government secrecy which lead to dictatorships.

Anyone seriously concerned about publication of government news as it affects our way of life can do two things: (1) Demand of his congressman that tighter restrictions be placed on real military information; and, (2) demand just as emphatically that public employees on all levels tell the public, which employs them, *everything* not relating to our defense potential.

Demands for governmental press control can be left to the communists and other enemies of the American way of life. This type of control has been seen in Russia and in Hitler's Germany.

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